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ABSTRACT

Although Asian Americans enjoy the image of a "successful minority," they also have endured hardships and prejudices. This report traces the history of the Japanese and Chinese experience in the United States. Some similarities are discernible in the immigration patterns of the two ethnic populations. The first wave of immigrants provided cheap laborers and railroad construction workers. It was followed by a transitional stage of new immigrants who came largely from an entrepreneurial class and/or a class of accomplished intellectuals. The current stage commenced with the easing of the Chinese immigration rules, the dispersion of the Japanese after the war, suburbanization, and the rise of a new Asian middle class. Their children are not satisfied with material achievements and are increasingly concerned with social inequality. These stages are discussed in detail. The development of new psychological identities is discussed also. (PS)

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ASIAN-AMERICAN YOUTH

WILLIAM T. LIU

Director, Center for the Study of Man in Contemporary Society
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

ELENA S. H. YU

Assistant Professor of Sociology
University of Notre Dame
Notre Dame, Indiana

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CHAPTER XVI

Asian-American Youth

WILLIAM T. LIU AND ELENA S. H. YU

In a society which glorifies youth and deprecates the aged, Asian-American youth are at once a conspicuous constituent of the American society and, at the same time, an invisible minority. In an era characterized by heightened awareness of social inequality and racial prejudice, Asian-American youth have become a legitimate object of social research, but at the same time the least systematically studied of the minority groups in this country. Against the surging waves of student unrest and civil rights movement, the blacks, the Chicanos, the Indians, and the Puerto Ricans have been accorded the social category of "minorities" and awarded research funds and scholarships, as well as "equal opportunities." The achievements of Asian-American youth in turn have been hailed as "success stories" in the news media. Compared to other nonwhite minorities in this country, they have indeed attained relatively higher socioeconomic status. Thus, while black males of sixteen years old and over earned an average income of $4,572 in 1969 and Mexican-American males of the same age-range earned $5,166 for the same period, Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino males had a mean income of $8,183, $6,877 and $5,710 respectively. If one looks at the educational background of these different ethnic populations, the data are even more impressive. Of those males who are sixteen years old and over, the 1970 Census showed that 69.9 percent of the Japanese, 62.2 percent of the Chinese, and 49.4 percent of the Filipinos completed high school, whereas only 32.0 percent of the blacks and 28.1 percent of the Mexican Americans attained a comparable educational level.[1] These statistics, however,

1. Cf. U.S. Bureau of the Census. Census of Population: 1970. Subject Reports, Final Report PC (2)-1G: Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos in the United States; Final Report PC (2)-B; Negro Population, and Final Report PC (2)-1C: Persons of Spanish Origin.

fail to depict the history of hardships and prejudices that the Asian minority groups have endured, and fail to show the anguish of Asian-American youth in their search for identity. Furthermore, the image of Asian Americans as a "successful minority" tends to carry a slippery implication: that Asian Americans do not have social problems and may therefore be left alone. As a result, funding of research on Asian Americans as minorities is well-meaningly given relatively low priority. In some cases, minority scholarships explicitly include blacks, Chicanos, Indians, and Puerto Ricans, but give no reference to Chinese, Japanese, Korean, or Filipino youth in this country.

A comprehensive statement about Asian-American youth must deal with at least two conceptual problems: (a) the definition of youth and (b) the definition of Asian Americans. From a demographic perspective, the specific age group to which "youth" applies is not at all clear and is oftentimes fairly elastic. From a biological point of view, the stages of human growth are generally described as infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age—leaving youth aside as a transitional process between childhood and old age.

On the other hand, the term "Asian American" also suffers from a lack of clarity in meaning, since scholars are not uniformly agreed as to what "Asians" include. Chinese, Japanese, Koreans, Cambodians, Burmese, Laotians, Thais, Malaysians, and Filipinos are generally considered Asians. But Pakistanis, inhabitants of India, Ceylon, Indonesia, and the Samoan Islands have not been consistently perceived as "Asians" by both scholars and layman alike. Due to their particular historical experiences and ideological stance, the division between generations, languages, geographic origins, religions, occupations, or family names sometimes overrides the pan-Asian identity. The ambiguity of this concept is further reflected by the absence of a separate listing in the U.S. Census for Asians. These conceptual difficulties are compounded by the meager number of Chinese, Japanese, and Filipinos—the only Asians listed in the census—compared to other ethnic groups in the country. Table 1 below shows the percentage distribution of the United States population by race over the decades of this century. It is clear that the largest of the Asian groups listed in table 1, namely,

TABLE 1

U.S. POPULATION FROM 1900 TO 1970, BY RACE

YEAR	PERCENT WHITE	PERCENT NEGRO	PERCENT INDIAN	PERCENT JAPANESE	PERCENT CHINESE	PERCENT FILIPINO	PERCENT ALL OTHER	TOTAL
1970	87.5	11.11	0.39	0.29	0.21	0.17	0.36	203,211,926
1960	88.6	10.52	0.29	0.26	0.13	0.10	0.12	179,323,175
1950	89.3	9.94	0.24	0.22	0.09	0.09	0.11	151,325,798
1940[a]	89.6	9.74	0.26	0.22	0.08	0.08	0.08	132,165,129
1930[a]	89.6	9.65	0.28	0.23	0.08	0.09	0.07	123,202,660
1920[a]	89.5	9.87	0.14	0.21	0.08	0.03	0.07	106,021,568
1910[a]	88.7	10.66	0.30	0.17	0.10	0.003	0.07	92,228,531
1900	87.7	11.59	0.31	0.11	0.16	——[b]	0.09	76,212,168

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce. 1970 Census of Population, Vol. 1: Characteristics of the Population, Table 48, p. 1-202.

[a] Data for 1910 through 1940 include the small number of residents in certain outlying areas of sovereignty or jurisdiction.

[b] Included with "all other."

Japanese, Chinese, and Filipino, constituted only 0.67 percent of the total United States population in 1970, even though the three Asian populations together have increased considerably since the turn of the century.[2]

The limited census data on Asian Americans, space restrictions, and the paucity of systematic research on Filipino Americans led to the pragmatic decision to concentrate mainly on the Chinese and the Japanese population. Following the age breakdowns provided in the census, a combined total of 240,512 (between the ages of fifteen to twenty-four) of Asian origin is selected for discussion. This figure is only less than one percent of the total population in the United States for the same age group. Table 2 below presents the sex distribution of these various Asian-American youth. While the Japanese population as a whole is larger than that of the Chinese in the United States, there are more Chinese youth between the ages fifteen and twenty-four than there are Japanese youth of the same age group, relative to their total population counts, a point which will be elaborated later. Their growing dissatisfaction with the image of "model minority" and their discontent with the realities of Chinatown have precipitated gang fights in recent

1. These figures, however, do not make the distinction between migration and net migration. The latter indicates those immigrants who came to stay minus those who had departed at the time the census was taken.

TABLE 2

PERCENT OF THE JAPANESE, CHINESE AND FILIPINO POPULATIONS WHO ARE IN THE AGE GROUP FIFTEEN TO TWENTY-FOUR, 1970

ETHNIC GROUP	PERCENT MALE	PERCENT FEMALE	TOTAL
Japanese	8.1	8.2	588,324
Chinese	10.6	10.1	431,583
Filipino	8.0	8.5	336,731

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1970. Subject Reports, Final Report PC (2) - 1G. Japanese, Chinese and Filipino, in the United States, pages 2-61, 120.

years. To understand their crisis, it is essential that we rev briefly the background events of Asian immigration in the Uni States.

Both the Japanese and the Chinese have been singled out as the stereotypes of Asians, and have in the past been legally defined as "aliens ineligible to citizenship." Yet the specific details of their exclusion or incarceration have not been exactly identical. Whereas the Chinese came originally for gold dust and coolie labor, the Japanese arrived when there was a demand for agricultural helpers. Originally classified as Chinese,[3] the Japanese soon grew in number and forged a new oriental image, separate from the "Chinaman" stereotype.[4] During the height of the anti-Oriental movement in the United States, both groups were the object of the Exclusion Act, and both Chinese and Japanese workers in California at one time reportedly resorted to adverse wage cutting in order to procure some form of subsistence employment.[5] But whereas the Japanese were subsequently incarcerated during the Second World War, the Chinese were spared such imprisonment. The latter, however, came under surveillance during the McCarthy era.

3. Cf. George F. Seward, *Chinese Immigration: Its Social and Economic Aspects*, (New York: Arno Press and the New York Times, 1970), p. 5.

4. San Francisco *Chronicle*, June 17, 1869; Sacramento *Union*, Jan. 19, 1888.

5. Varden Fuller, "The Supply of Agricultural Labor as a Factor in the Evolution of Farm Organization in California," in *Hearings before a Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and Labor, United States Senate, Seventy-Sixth Congress, Third Session Pursuant to S. Res. 266 (74th Congress)*, Washington, 1940, Part 54, 1. 19778.

The Initial Stage: Welcomed Workers—Unwelcomed Immigrants

Although there was a small number of Chinese in the United States during the first half of the nineteenth century, the first wave of Chinese immigrants did not arrive in this country until the second half of that century. Drastic political and socioeconomic developments in the homeland, such as the collapse of the Manchu government, the encroachment of Western economic and territorial expansion, the occurrence of natural calamities, the Taiping Rebellion, economic depression, and the impact of Western technology, all served to precipitate the mass migration of the Chinese, especially those from the southeastern seaboard of China where internal turmoil was most devastating. News of the California gold rush attracted many young Chinese males to try their luck in "Old Gold Mountain," a name designating San Francisco. As sojourners in the American frontier, these Chinese youths scavenged the gold mines abandoned by white miners and assumed the lowliest form of labor or "women's work." The stress and strain of prolonged sea travel precluded their wives from traveling with them, thereby leading to an unbalanced sex ratio among the Chinese immigrants. Their strange attires, repugnant habits, cacophonous dialects and pidgin English made them an object of curiosity as well as condemnation. In a little over a decade after the gold rush, they were to experience the first indication of anti-Chinese sentiment. As the Hawaiian sugar plantations imported the first group of 180 Chinese contract-laborers in 1852, the Foreign Miner's Tax was being levied on the Chinese in California.[6] The mounting hostility against the Chinese was aggravated by the dwindling mining industry, the competition for alternative jobs, the depression of the 1870s, and finally culminated in the passage of the first Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882.[7]

6. Gunther Barth, *Bitter Strength* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 134ff. Also see Karl Yoneda, "100 Years of Japanese Labor History in the U.S.A.," in *Roots: An Asian American Reader*, eds. Amy Tachiki, Eddie Wong, Franklin Odo and Buck Wong (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1970), pp. 150-8.

7. S. W. Kung, *Chinese in American Life* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), p. 82.

When the Japanese came to the shores of the United States, the Chinese had already served their terms as coolies on the railroads and were viewed as unwelcome residents. Thus, the initial stage of Japanese immigration began on the eve of the Chinese expulsion. In 1868, to be precise, the first group of 148 Japanese contract-workers arrived in Hawaii.[8] Their delayed participation in the American labor market was not due to their ignorance of the prospects, but to the closed-door policy of Japan which prohibited emigration. In 1886, a handful of Japanese farmers were brought to California by two Englishmen.[9] Subsequent Japanese immigrants settled swiftly on the farmlands on the West Coast. Table 3 shows the increase in numbers of Chinese and Japanese immigrants.

TABLE 3

UNITED STATES IMMIGRANTS OF CHINESE AND JAPANESE ANCESTRIES

Census Year	Mainland		Mainland and Hawaii	
	Chinese	Japanese	Chinese	Japanese
1860.....	34,933			
1870.....	63,199			
1880.....	105,465	148		
1890.....	107,488	2,039	124,240	
1900.....	89,863	24,326	115,630	85,437
1910.....	71,531	72,157	93,205	151,832
1920.....	61,639	111,010	85,146	220,281
1930.....	74,954	138,834	102,133	278,465
1940.....	77,504	126,947	106,278	284,852
1950.....	117,629	141,768	150,005	326,366
1960.....	199,093	260,877	237,292	464,332
1970.....	383,023	373,083	435,062	591,290

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1970. Subject Report PC(2)-1G Japanese, Chinese, and Filipinos in the United States; William Petersen, *Japanese Americans* (New York: Random House, 1972), Table 2-2, p. 20; S. W. Kung, *Chinese in American Life* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1962), table 15, p. 60 and table 1, p. 33.

During this early phase of Japanese immigration, the government in Japan played an important role in the selection and organization of the immigrants. The Chinese immigrants, in contrast, came largely against the wishes of the Ch'ing government. Assistance was provided instead by relatives, kinsmen's organizations, and villagers back home. In addition, there was the noted occupational

8. Karl Yoneda, op. cit.

9. Ibid.

difference between the two Asian groups. Unlike the Chinese, who were mainly miners and unskilled workers, the Japanese immigrants were largely farm workers and shopkeepers, and were generally from a better educated stratum in Japan than their Chinese counterparts. In a few short years, many Japanese farmers rose from their tenant-farm status by acquiring farm properties through successive piecemeal acquisitions. By 1909, there were reportedly 6,000 Japanese farmers in western states who together owned 210,000 acres of land.[10] The Chinese on the other hand, were miners and railroad workers who provided badly needed services in the frontier towns of California. But such needs were temporary. As the last spike was driven to complete the railroad, the need for coolie labor dropped sharply. Mass demonstrations, organized violence, and hostile public opinion were intense enough to prompt legal authorities to ignore the civil rights of Chinese immigrants. Discriminatory legislation against the Asian immigrants followed. The first Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882 was followed by the Scott Act of 1888, which prevented all Chinese laborers who had left the United States—even for temporary visits—from returning.[11] Likewise the famous Gentlemen's Agreement in 1907 bound the Japanese government to withhold passports from Japanese laborers and symbolically ended the initial stage of Japanese immigration.

Some similarities are discernible in the immigration pattern of these two ethnic populations. An initial stage of cheap laborers and railroad construction workers characterized the first wave of immigration, followed by a transitional stage of new immigrants who came largely from a shrewd entrepreneurial class and/or strata of accomplished intellectuals. The current stage commenced with the easing of Chinese immigration rules, the dispersion of the Japanese after the war, suburbanization, and the rise of a new Asian middle class, whose children are no longer satisfied with material achievements, and are increasingly concerned with social inequality. These stages are summarized in table 4.

10. United States Senate, 1911, 23:75-89, as quoted in William Petersen, *Japanese Americans* (New York: Random House, 1972), p. 29.

11. S. W. Kung, op. cit., p. 83.

TABLE 4

A SUMMARY OF THE THREE STAGES OF CHINESE AND JAPANESE IMMIGRATION

YEARS	CHINESE IMMIGRATION	YEARS	JAPANESE IMMIGRATION
1850-1890	*Initial Stage:* Coolie labor in mines and on railroads. No legal or economic protection. 1882 Exclusion Act. High sex ratio of males to females. No family life.	1880-1920	*Initial Stage:* Agricultural labor and railroad construction. High ratio of males to females. Shift from rural to urban centers.
1890-1940	*Transitional Stage:* Services in urban centers; gradual concentration into urban ghetto pockets. High sex ratio of males to females. Monolithic control by Clan Associations (six companies).	1920-1950	*Transitional Stage:* Exclusion and denial of citizenship. Gradual balance of sex ratio. Family cohesion linked by district associational membership. Abrupt entrance into war time incarceration. Loyalty declarations sought.
1940-1970	*Current Stage:* Restoration of immigration at 105 per year in 1943 to selective immigration in 1965. Gradual balance of sex ratio; family cohesion. Social mobility and employment dispersion. Concentration in large urban centers and suburbanization. Diversified community organization and diverse origins of immigrants of Chinese descent.	1950-1970	*Current Stage:* Dispersion into other parts from war camps. Social mobility and employment dispersion. Sansei culture; suburbanization.

Transitional Adaptation

The curtailment of immigration to the United States posed survival threats to both groups of Asian immigrants at the end of their respective initial stages. In the search for adaptation strategies amidst a manifestly hostile society, their respective economic modes of livelihood and previous social experiences determined how each ethnic group organized its effort.

The Japanese, having first settled as farmers and engaged in the production as well as the distribution of agricultural goods, created various forms of social organizations which were structurally open,[12] (i.e., voluntary) and provided networks beyond the

12. Cf. John Modell, "The Japanese of Los Angeles: A Study of Growth and Accommodation, 1900-1946," (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1969); William Petersen, op. cit. chapter 3. Also cf. Tadashi Fukutake, *Japanese Rural Society* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), chapter 6;

confines of the ethnic community. Their clustered farmhouses, in contrast to the scattered settlements of the Europeans in the Midwest, as well as the development of the *buraku*,[13] *kenjinkai*,[14] and *tanomoshi*[15] systems, and the sense of social obligation which characterized the Japanese employer-employee relations all functioned to enhance the communication channels of this Asian population, and served to provide for collective welfare maintenance, economic assistance, social control; they further fulfilled the latent function of freeing many young farmers from other types of menial tasks in order to receive formal training in alternative occupations such as school teachers, shopkeepers, and doctors.[16]

The Chinese, on the other hand, established various district or clan associations,[17] which were structurally closed systems. Whereas membership in the Japanese associations was voluntary and on an individual basis,[18] the Chinese district associations or

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Richard K. Beardsley, John W. Hall, and Robert E. Ward, *Village Japan* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), chapter 12; John F. Embree, *Suye Mura: A Japanese Village* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1939), chapter 2.

13. The *buraku* pattern typified a cluster of mutual aide households in close proximity, for the purpose of collective welfare maintenance and economic assistance.

14. The *kenjinkai* was the urban counterpart of the rural *buraku*. It functioned as employment agency, district social center, and mediating agent. Through publications in Japanese, newcomers learned about citizenship requirements, taxes, health, and social facilities. Contrary to some of the prevailing views, *ken* consciousness was characteristic only of Japanese living abroad.

15. A variant of the *buraku* was known as *tanomoshi*, which literally means "dependable," deriving from the word *tanomu*. *Tanomu* had the combined function of loan and investment companies for its members. Both the *buraku* (organized on the basis of geographic propinquity) and the *tanomoshi* (organized on the basis of economic mutual aid) helped earlier Japanese farmers to settle and be self-sufficient.

16. John F. Embree, op. cit., pp. 228-29.

17. Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Lineage and Society* (New York: Humanities Press, 1966); *Immigrants and Associations*, ed. Lloyd A. Fallers (Paris: Mouton Publishers, 1967).

18. Cf. Michinari Fujita, "The Japanese Associations in America," *Sociology and Social Research* 13 (January-February 1929): 211-18; Ivan H. Light, op. cit., p. 82.

hui kuan were mandatory in many respects.[19] Such a universal membership allowed less individual freedom to deviate from the group norm. Furthermore, these district associations belonged to a congress for the Chinese group which provided tighter ethnic control. The corresponding absence of a central congress for the Japanese *kenjinkai* allowed structural flexibilities more conducive to change on the community level. While the Japanese business relationship was based on a paternalistic model, that of the Chinese coincided largely with particular clan or district membership. As a result, purely ascribed social status was prevalent in various industries such as the laundry trade, tailoring, and others,[20] as they were controlled by clans. The clustered urban settlement of the Chinese and their individual affiliations with their district associations generated internal competition that led to many *tong* conflicts, much publicized in the early days. The open Japanese associations in turn regulated internal competition through discussion and collective decision making. Since organizational memberships cut across ascribed social status, the Japanese succeeded in fostering an externally-oriented sense of competition.[21] The open (Japanese) versus the closed (Chinese) structures of these ethnic associations may be one main reason for the differential degree of acculturation between the two Asian ethnic groups.

Another peculiar aspect of the transitional stage of immigration was the persistently imbalanced sex ratios among the Chinese, which occurred to a much lesser extent among the Japanese population. From the census in 1970, it was possible to compute the sex ratios for both Japanese and Chinese in the United States as far back as 1900. This is shown in table 5, columns 2 and 4. The sex ratio for all United States population during the same period is presented in column 6 for comparison purposes.

19. Stanford Lyman, "The Structure of Chinese Society in 19th Century America," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, (Berkeley), 1961); idem, "Contrasts in the Community Organization of Chinese and Japanese in North America," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology* 5 (1968): 51-67; William Hoy, *The Chinese Six Companies* (San Francisco: Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, 1942).

20. Stanford M. Lyman, *Chinese Americans* (New York: Random House, 1974).

21. Ivan H. Light, *Ethnic Enterprise in America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), p. 68.

When one compares these results with the data presented for a much earlier period by both Petersen[22] (see column 3) and Kung[23] (in column 5 of the same table), both of which contained the sex ratio for Japanese and Chinese respectively on the mainland (i.e., excluding Hawaii), the figures are even more dramatic. In 1890, there were 2,678.9 Chinese males on the Mainland for every 100 females; in 1900, there were as many as 2,370 Japanese males per 100 females. The large influx of Chinese sojourners, who came without their wives and children, accounted for the high sex ratio during the free immigration period (1820-1882). As anti-Chinese agitation gained momentum, the Chinese not only found themselves denied legal rights and prohibited from intermarriage with whites, but also the object of exclusion debates by Congress.[24] The series of Exclusion Acts passed after 1882 succeeded in preventing further entry of Chinese into this country and motivated many of those who stayed behind to terminate their sojourn. This is reflected by the gradual decline of the sex ratio after 1900. These developments, however, were to have an adverse effect on the social and moral life of many Chinese men. For one thing, the exclusion laws created a demand for the smuggling of wives and children who desired to be reunited with their families. Prostitution is said to have been common during this period. Furthermore, the intensely irrational behavior of the white population toward the Chinese community practically restricted the latter from having any form of social or recreational life. Gambling and opium-smoking seemed harmless compared to what one might encounter on the streets.

The gradual concentration of the Chinese in large cities facilitated the tight control of the clan or district associations and reinforced ghetto life-styles. Limited businesses and employment opportunities within the walls of the Chinese ghetto only intensified intraethnic competition.

Perhaps the most tragic consequence of the Exclusion Acts was the fact that a significant proportion of the Chinese in the

22. Petersen, op. cit., p. 196.

23. Kung, op. cit., p. 33.

24. Lyman, *Chinese Americans*, p. 91.

TABLE 5

SEX (MALE/FEMALE) RATIO FOR THE JAPANESE AND CHINESE POPULATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND MAINLAND ONLY AND FOR ALL U.S. POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES, 1860-1970

(1)	Japanese (2)	(3)	Chinese (4)	(5)	(6)
Year	U. S.[a]	Mainland[b] Only	U. S.[a]	Mainland[c] Only	All U. S. Population
1860....				(1,858.1)	
1870....				(1,284.1)	
1880....				(2,106.8)	
1890....		(687.3)		(2,678.9)	
1900....	487.1	(2,369.6)	1,385.1	(1,887.2)	104.6
1910....	349.2	(694.1)	925.8	(1,430.1)	106.2
1920....	159.6	(189.8)	465.7	(695.5)	104.1
1930....	128.9	(143.3)	296.4	(394.7)	102.6
1940....	119.1	(130.9)	224.5	(295.3)	100.8
1950....	108.6	(117.7)	168.1	(189.6)	98.7
1960....	93.9	(92.0)	133.2	(133.1)	97.1
1970....	84.8		110.7		94.8

[a] These figures are calculated from the statistics given in the Census of the Population: 1970. Volume 1, Characteristics of the Population. Part 1, United States Summary—Section 1. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1973), Table 48, page 1-262. Data for 1910 through 1940 include the small number of residents in certain outlying areas of sovereignty or jurisdiction.

[b] These figures are taken from Petersen, op. cit., p. 196.

[c] These figures are taken from Kung, op. cit., p. 33. The sex ratio he calculated for 1960 is most likely based on the total United States population instead of for the mainland alone.

United States were thereby deprived of second-generation offspring.[25] This has been a factor in the persistently imbalanced sex ratio of the Chinese.

On the other hand, the Japanese were favored with a much delayed Exclusion Act (passed in 1924) by virtue of their late entry into the American labor scene, although they too were legally defined as "aliens ineligible to citizenship."[26] Thus, even though a large majority of the first-generation or *Issei Japanese* married at a later age and had wives who were generally eight to ten years younger than themselves,[27] they were nonetheless able to assume a normal

25. Lyman, in *Chinese Americans*, chapter 5, argues that it was essentially this "vacuum" of second-generation offspring that resulted in the low crime rates found among the Chinese immigrants. He refutes the "myth" that strong family ties and Confucian ethics among the Chinese served as a deterrent to crime by countering that the small number of 470 arrests for youths between fifteen and nineteen during the period of 1900 and 1917 actually constituted 21 percent of the Chinese in that age group.

26. Kung, op. cit., p. 85.

27. Roger Daniels, "The Issei Generation," in Amy Tachiki, Eddie Wong, Franklin Odo, with Buck Wong, op. cit., pp. 138-49.

family life in spite of the demands of frontier labor. In a few decades, the Japanese sex ratio approached normality.

The advent of the Second World War inflicted a uniquely painful experience on the Japanese population, especially the *Nisei* youth who at this time averaged about seventeen years of age. What happened after the Pearl Harbor attack has been well documented and cannot be adequately described in this brief chapter.[28] Executive Order 9066 provided the legitimate authority. The rationale was "military necessity;" the consequence, "relocation camps." Japanese-American youth subject to the draft were arbitrarily classified as "ineligible because of physical defect," until September 1, 1942, when they were reclassified as "enemy aliens." A little over four months later, a new policy was instituted which required these youth to serve in the American armed forces in order to prove their loyalty.[29] Questionnaires designed to test loyalty were administered to the Japanese. Those that answered in the affirmative were drafted into the military service. The others were considered "disloyal." The net effect of such treatment was a *Nisei* generation torn by irreconcilable conflicts. As they enthusiastically volunteered for "language instruction services" in the military and registered their loyalty in writing and actions,[30] the *Nisei* generation could not help but realize that many of their parents were on the other side of the camp—the "disloyal" respondents.

Whatever the responsibilities and blames, a large number of the Japanese population chose to disseminate after the war ended. The casualties of war and property loss broke the career lines of an earlier period. Reentry into the normal civilian life was not easy. Searching for new meaning and identity was an emotional

28. Cf. Petersen, op. cit.; Dorothy S. Thomas and R. S. Nishimoto, *The Spoilage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1946); Dorothy S. Thomas, *The Salvage* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1961); Bill Hosokawa, *Nisei* (New York: William Morrow & Co., Inc., 1969); Harry Kitano, *Japanese Americans* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1969).

29. Petersen, op. cit., p. 84.

30. Petersen (op. cit., p. 87) indicates that a total of 84 percent of all Japanese aged seventeen or older who were incarcerated endorsed the loyalty items in the questionnaire.

and personal crisis for the Japanese youth, an experience which the Chinese did not yet share.

The Current Stage

The repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943 marked the start of a new era for Asian Americans in general and Chinese Americans in particular. The original stipulation of an annual quota of 105[31] Chinese immigrants was increased in subsequent years by the passage of other bills which not only encouraged the entry of numerous Chinese, but facilitated their naturalization as well. From 1956 to 1961, a considerable number of Chinese aged five to fourteen were admitted into this country, and were later to become politically active in the late 1960s and early 1970s.[32] This large immigration of young Chinese of both sexes resulted in the Chinese-American population nearly doubling in each of the decades 1950-60 and 1960-70.

The economic prosperity after the war and the baby boom created a new generation of Asian-American youth. The transformation of the Chinese from an "unassimilable Chinaman" to a member of the emerging middle class was achieved through gradual residential dispersion into suburban communities. But the psychological transformation of their identity with the American society is not accurately reflected by the demographic profiles. Nurtured in middle-class affluence, educated in the American public school system, indoctrinated with the ideals of justice, equality, and brotherhood, molded by the American legal values and awakened by the militancy of other minority groups, both the Chinese and the Japanese youth generations have experienced a similar *sweet and sour* process by being American, a theme so appropriately portrayed in Frank Chin's play, "The Chickencoop Chinaman." Thus the class mobility over generations, heightened racial awareness, facilitated by generational differences of cultural continuities have produced a youth culture among those of Asian

31. Kung, op. cit., p. 106ff.

32. Lyman, *Chinese Americans*, p. 159.

descent: the *sweet and sour* generation.[33] There are many forms of identity adaptation among these sweet and sour youths. While some are still puzzled by the meaning of assimilation, a separate focus of militancy has appeared on the horizon of Asian-American youth.

One must admit that minority activism was only a part of the general student activism directed against the Vietnam War in the late 1960s. For the Asian-American youth, however, the Vietnam War had an added meaning: it reminded them of the white man's ugly record of racism and his interference in the yellow man's right to self-determination.

Whether or not this is *objectively* true is a separate—though certainly valid—issue. It is the *subjective* interpretation of white racism that is crucial. The cry for racial equality is getting louder. Unlike the European immigrants whose past may be lost in time and space, through marriage or residential mobility, Asian-Americans are confronted with distinctive color pigmentation which time can not bury. Many resent the white man's refusal to acknowledge the yellow man's American identity. From a historical perspective, Asian-American activism is particularly significant. For the first time in a hundred years, the quiet man has broken his silence.

Studies on Asian-American political involvement are few and are certainly much needed. One interesting study on this subject was conducted by Maykovich, who asked the question: "Why do Sansei students, who seem to have everything—social acceptance, educational achievement, occupational opportunities, and in some cases, affluence—become involved in activism and even provide leadership in institutional change?"[34] In attempting to answer the

33. The national origin quota law was finally repealed in 1965 and new legislation on selective immigration became effective in 1968. Based on the 1970 Census, there were a total of 95,755 Japanese-American youth between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five, and 89,111 Chinese-Americans of the same age group. The effect of changes in immigration rules after World War II is evident in the large representation of Chinese-American youth. As shown in Table 2, there are close to 11 percent of all Chinese males in the youth cohort compared to about 8 percent of the Japanese males in that same age group.

34. Minako Maykovich, *Japanese American Identity Dilemma* (Tokyo: Waseda University Press, 1972), chapters 7 and 8. Four subgroups among

question, he surveyed 508 Sansei students in California and postulated a Sansei typology along two principal axes: adherence to traditional values of the Japanese culture, and involvement in sociopolitical actions. The interplay of these two axes results in four distinct types of the Sansei Japanese, as shown in table 6 below.

TABLE 6
SANSEI TYPES

		Ideology: Traditional Values	
		Acceptance	Rejection
Action: Involvement in social issues	Yes	Liberated	Militant Radical Revolutionary
	No	Conformist Individual achiever Conforming activist	Anomie Anomic activist Alienated

Source: Minako Maykovich, *Japanese American Identity Dilemma* (Tokyo: Waseda University Press, 1972), p. 108.

A cluster of interrelated variables was analyzed to differentiate these ideal types of the Sansei youth. Among them are (a) father's status as measured principally by his occupation, (b) parental political attitudes, understanding and expectation of the child's achievement, (c) reference group of the Sansei, (d) identity and self-concept of these youths, (e) the youth's attitudes and comprehension of parental expectations and understanding, and (f) the youth's behavior in student demonstrations as well as involvement in other sociopolitical issues.

By tracing the home environments of these youth, and assessing their individual attitudes and behavior, Maykovich has provided helpful insights in understanding the contrast between the Conformist Sansei and the Militants, as well as the distinction between the Liberated youth and the Anomic ones. He further postulated that the high incidence of Kibei fathers is a significant factor in explaining subjective feelings of powerlessness, isolation and normlessness of both the Kibei fathers and their Militant children. There

Japanese-Americans may be identified as follows: Issei (born in Japan and emigrated to the United States); Nisei (children of Issei); Sansei (children of Nisei); and Kibei (Nisei who returned to Japan for their education).

is also a lack of mutual understanding between father and child, and although the Militant fathers as a rule are politically liberal, the fathers of the Revolutionray subgroup are inclined to discourage rather than encourage political activism in their children. For this reason, Maykovich believes that being revolutionary is an expression of rebellion against parental authority.[35]

The Conformists consist of those Sansei who accept the traditional values of diligence, conformity and assimilation and are not involved in social issues. Within this group, the individual achiever tends to concern himself solely with self-improvement, while the conforming activist is occasionally pressured into social action as he conforms to the traditional Japanese values. In general, fathers of the conformist group hold higher occupational status, feel significantly more powerful and less alienated either within the ethnic community or the larger society, compared to fathers of the other types. In terms of attitudes, fathers of the Conformists are politically conservative—and therefore discourage political activities of their children as well. As children, the politically conservative Conformist Sansei are more likely to feel a lack of parental understanding and to have poor communication with their parents, even though they use their parents' traditional values as their reference. As students, they are also likely to feel that their parents' expectations are higher than they in fact are, and see education as a pragmatic means to higher occupational goals. Although they show less anxiety than the Militants or the Anomics, they are less likely to express themselves and hence are more inconspicuous on the political, social, or personal levels. They are more likely than others to have a diffused identity, rather than a totalistic identity based solely on racial terms.

The Militants come from politically liberal families, reject the traditional values, and are actively involved in social issues. As a group, they have proportionately more Kibei fathers who feel alienated and are themselves the most alienated type of all. The lack of mutual parent-child understanding results in the children's over-estimation of parental achievement expectations; they tend to have a totalistic identity and are most likely to show anxiety

35. Ibid., p. 119.

and to express their frustrations. The Radicals among this group are concerned with improving the existing social order as well as embracing Marxist ideology. In contrast, the Revolutionaries see the destruction of the existing social structure as necessary in effecting social change and have as their reference group the Black Panthers.

The Liberated Sansei while adhering to traditional values, have imbibed the politically liberal attitudes of their parents, who encourage them to be politically active and self-directive. The mutual understanding between parents and child enables these Liberated Sansei to perceive accurately parental achievement expectations rather than exaggerate them. As a group, they manifested the least anxiety of all four types and are more likely than the Conformists or the Anomics to express their feelings. Like the Conformists, they score high on achievement and maintain a diffuse identity.

In contrast to the other three Sansei types, the Anomic group come from a lower social stratum. Their fathers are more likely to feel secure within the ethnic community but alienated from the larger society. Being politically conservative, they also discourage their children from political activities. There is a reported lack of understanding between father and child, and the Anomic Sansei manifest medium to low achievement in school.

Although Maykovich's data come from a nonrandom sample and his findings cannot therefore be considered definitive, the construction of a Sansei typology deserves attention. Youth culture has both dominant and variant themes. Factors which are responsible for such variations are complex. Maykovich's attempt to find a path model is, therefore, methodologically attractive at this stage of our knowledge of Japanese-American youth.

In spite of the variation of self-identity and social and political participation, the Japanese youth are relatively homogeneous with respect to the time-generational perspective. Youth of the fifteen through twenty-five age category belong to the Sansei cohort. Unlike the Issei and the Nisei, the Sansei cannot experientially remember the agonies of wartime degradation, and they are seeking alternative ways of finding their places in the changing American society. Many reject the value of passivity, diligence, and some even reject conformity, for they merely help to sustain the image

of docile Japanese Americans. In the final analysis, Sansei Japanese in America are responding to the youth culture by helping to create that culture.

In contrast to the Japanese, there is no neat pattern of time-generational uniformity for the Chinese in the fifteen through twenty-five age cohort. The gradual easing of immigration restrictions since the 1940s has resulted in an influx of foreign-born immigrants. Thus, according to the 1970 census, while only 21 percent of all the Japanese in the United States are foreign-born, 47 percent of the Chinese are foreign-born. In spite of the absence of data on age groups among the foreign-born, the figures nonetheless provide obvious contrasts in the number of foreign-born within these ethnic groups.

The structure of the Chinese community prior to the 1950s greatly limited the social contacts of Chinese children with the non-Chinese segments of the population. The existence of Chinese language schools,[36] while providing valuable language skills to the American-born children, also further assisted in segregating the early socialization experience of these Chinese children from their white counterparts. In spite of the high educational attainment and relatively low rates of delinquency and welfare cases, the Chinese population, at least during the period immediately after World War II, were still living in substandard housing units.[37]

Unlike the Japanese, who have established the Japanese-American Citizens League (JACL) as a unifying organization, the Chinese community does not have a central clearing house through which all the members and organizations may be located. One

36. In San Francisco, for example, there were nine Chinese language schools in Chinatown during the late fifties with a total of 2,500 students. Cf. Raymond Del Portillo, "A Survey of the Agencies and Institutions Affecting the Chinese Students in San Francisco's Junior High Schools," (Master's thesis, San Francisco State College, 1959), p. 26. Chinese language schools are also found in Chicago's Chinatown and in New York City.

37. In San Francisco, most of the Chinese population lived in Tract A-14, which includes Chinatown proper. Within Census Tract A-14, there were 1705 living units. Only 26 units were owner-occupied and the rest (1679) were rental properties. Only 441 of the 1705 (about 25 percent) had plumbing. Situations in other Chinatowns were not any different. Cf. James Wilbur Chin, "Problems of Assimilation and Cultural Pluralism Among Chinese Americans in San Francisco" (Master's thesis, University of the Pacific, 1965), pp. 17, 29, et passim.

obvious trend among the Chinese Americans is the dilution of clan or district-associational control among the younger generation and the formation of various nonprofit and voluntary organizations in large metropolitan areas aimed at improving housing and public health services, exposing or overcoming job discrimination, providing legal services, arranging language instruction for the young, and providing care for the elderly, among others. In addition, student and alumni associations are found exclusively among college and former students.

Conclusion

Sociologists since the time of Park[38] and Stonequist[39] have used the "marginal man" concept to denote the process of immigrant acculturation in America. Briefly, the theory postulates that foreigners brought their ways of doing things from the country of their origin, and, as they went through the acculturation process, took on the values and norms of the host society. Since one is unable to divorce himself entirely from his cultural roots, and yet is unable totally to embrace the new culture in which he becomes a member, the state of double cultural orientation creates a "marginal" existence. The theory assumes a unilineal movement, from culture A to culture B, which suggests implicitly that there are degrees of marginality.

The marginal man theory has some inherent weaknesses. First, there is a difference between marginal man defined by his ambivalence in using either one group or another as his reference group, and marginal adaptation, which suggests that the actor may adapt different ways in different circles of social network relations —thus resulting in a new cultural synthesis. The former is a holistic approach with no specified empirical referents, while the latter may be more useful in delineating the intricate process of cultural adaptation.[40] Second, the marginal man concept does not

38. Robert E. Park, "Human Migration and the Marginal Man," *American Journal of Sociology* 33 (May 1928): 881-93.

39. Everett Stonequist, "The Problem of the Marginal Man," *American Journal of Sociology* 41 (July 1935): 1-12.

40. William T. Liu, "The Marginal Catholics in the South: A Revision of Concepts," *American Journal of Sociology* 65 (January 1960): 385-90.

allow the possibility that a third culture may evolve as two cultures interact through the personal network relations of the immigrants. Third, since the actor is never the representation of all the elements in his given culture, his response to an alien culture may be selectively critical or selectively positive. The lack of specificity in the concept makes it theoretically futile and methodologically irrelevant.

In contrast to the marginal man theory, Lifton[41] coined the term "protean man." His theory does not emphasize the actor as being coerced by the conflicting demands of two different cultures. Rather, the protean man is a person who creates new symbols of self-identity through his perceptions of the external environment. It is the modern historical forces that shape the process of self-identity in a way different from the past. Old symbols may readily be abandoned in favor of new imagery as the actor experiences the motion of time and space, the weakening linkages of personal networks due to high mobility, and in general, the secularization of the traditional culture.

Lifton's thesis struck a strange note amidst a heightened cry for ethnic identity.[42] There is, since the advent of the Black Power Movement, an ethnic revival in the United States which challenges the white American to reach back into his cultural identity. There are the abstract unity symbols of people whose only commonality is what Erikson called "diffused identity." Maykovich had touched upon this theme only tangentially, but touched it nevertheless. Sansei Japanese, like many Sandai Chinese, because of weakened linkage with those who represent the past, begin to view the present and the future through a new perspective, one which no one has experienced before. But even Lifton, in his description of the two cases, clearly portrayed the importance of both subjects' respective network of personal relations. *It is through these successive stages of differential associations that these new forms of psychological identities took place.* The implications of such formation of psychological identities are far-reaching. The crumbling

41. Robert J. Lifton, "Protean Man," *Partisan Review* 35 (Winter 1968): 13-27.

42. Michael Novak, *The Rise of the Unmeltable Ethnics* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1971).

walls of Chinese ghettos and Japanese pockets, the erosion of traditional authorities, a steadily prosperous economy, a rising middle class, the anachronisms of clan associations, student radicalism, and an incongruity in color scheme have juxtaposed to form a new generation of Asian-American youth, creating and responding to a "third culture." Tired of living up to the expectations of a model minority, unimpressed by the passivity and timidity of their parents, proud of their heritage, and yet reaching into their Asian roots in order to give new meanings to their existence, this *sweet and sour* generation has undoubtedly created new symbols and forged an untrodden path for itself.

In retrospect, the three stages of gradual change among the Asian-Americans which resulted in the formation of a new consciousness and identity among the youth generation summarize the transformation of a major ethnic minority. Rigorous studies are needed in order to provide more detailed information on Asian-American youth. For example, how strong is the influence of the older generation on the younger generations? What type of peer-group association characterizes the Asian-American youth?

Aside from dating behavior, which does not give adequate data for arriving at any meaningful conclusion on peer group relations, there is little empirical evidence that influence of parents on Asian American youth has weakened. On the other hand studies of deviance did shed some light on this subject. For example, Kitano [43] and Maykovich [44] suggested that Sansei delinquents are likely to show the characteristics of "marginal man" in that they had weak identification with the ethnic community and the ethnic neighborhood, but Maykovich quickly added that delinquency is not a symptom of alienation, but rather of the youngster's attempt to develop an appropriate self as a compensation for failure.[45] There are even fewer systematic studies on Chinese-American delinquency except for newspaper reports.

One way to get at the group influence, particularly the lineal influence on Asian-American youth, would be through the study

43. Kitano, op. cit.

44. Maykovich, op. cit.

45. Ibid., p. 73.

of school achievement through time. Nisei parents, like Chinese parents in general, are concerned about achievement and advancement through educational attainment. Census data on educational attainment for both groups of study indicate that Asian Americans excel consistently over the last few decades in education. Thus, it would be important to find out how ethnic identity may continue to influence third generation Asian-American youth in America today. The hypothesis is that if socialization into the ethnic role may simultaneously result in high academic achievement, then a weakening of ethnic identity over the three generations may concommitantly lessen the actual level of achievement. The data are not available, but judging from the Jewish experience on the East Coast, the hypothesis may be plausible.

There are obviously many puzzling questions yet to be raised. For example, what has been the effect of racial and sexual discrimination on the Asian-American women? Statistics from the 1970 census indicated that there is an extremely large gap between the male and female income of these Asian ethnics. The unique blend of race and sex has certainly prevented them from attaining the kind of materialistic achievement attributed to their brethren. Has the Women's Liberation Movement had any bearing on Asian consciousness and the Asian woman's image? Asian women, like black women, have an added minority status to be overcome. Unlike black women, however, Asian women have traditionally depended on their men, and the sex ratio, especially for the Chinese population, has facilitated the dependency status economically. These variables have not been built into empirical studies.